m 77 5 Jur

London, January 13, 1758.

PROPOSALS

For PRINTING by SUBSCRIPTION,

BRITANNIA ELUCIDATA:

A

POLITICAL SURVEY

OF

BRITAIN:

BEING A

SERIES of REFLECTIONS

ON THE

Situation, Lands, Inhabitants, Revenues, Colonies, *and* Commerce, *of this* ISLAND:

Intended to shew,

That we have not as yet approached near the Summit of IMPROVEMENT; but that it will afford Employment to many Generations, before they push to their utmost Extent the Natural Advantages of GREAT BRITAIN.

By *JOHN CAMPBELL*, LL.D.

BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA·

BRITANNIA ELUCIDATA, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

CONTAINING

A Succinct PLAN of the whole WORK.

IT is the Happineſs of a few only to ſerve, but it is the Duty of all to wiſh well to their Country. He who does this ſincerely, will find many, and ſome of theſe favourable Opportunities, of making his Sentiments known, and of endeavouring at leaſt to carry them into Execution. Every Man's Talents and Station put this in his Power, if he has the Will and the Courage to apply them: And he who has ſpent his Time amongſt Books, and dedicated his Study to Hiſtory, in the largeſt Senſe, muſt frequently diſcover in other Countries Things ſimilar to thoſe he has obſerved in his own; and by attending to the Cauſes and Conſequences of thoſe, is the better enabled to comprehend theſe. By meditating on, and comparing a Variety of ſuch Tranſactions, he will inſenſibly acquire a Facility of transferring his Thoughts from other Countries to this; and, by labouring to fix his Sentiments according to the Lights which Evidence and Experience lend to Truth, he qualifies himſelf to become a Guide, though not a Director, to others. He may ſhew them what he has collected; he may tell them what he has thought; he may modeſtly hint either his Hopes or Fears, and recommend or diſſuade whatever he conceives may promote, or whatever he apprehends may impair the public Weal.

The

The longer he continues to deliberate on ſuch Subjects in his own Mind, the more Pains he takes in his Inquiries, the oftener he conſults thoſe who are able to correct and inform him, the more he diveſts himſelf from Prejudice of every kind, and the ſtronger his Reſolution of ſacrificing every Conſideration to the Love of Truth, the better he will be qualified for ſuch Reſearches, and the more capable of diſcerning what really may turn to the Advantage or Diſadvantage of his Country. He will, from this kind of Exerciſe, learn to reſpect Authority no farther than not to differ from it, without being able to ſhew his Reaſons; to diſtruſt his own Opinions, becauſe they are ſuch, and not let go his Scruples till he is thoroughly convinced he has Fact on his Side; to diſtinguiſh vulgar Truths, as well as vulgar Errors; to affirm rarely, and with Modeſty; to reject nothing, but after ſtrict Examination, and then with Decency; to weigh Matters of Importance with Caution, but not to dwell on Trifles; and, after all, to leave his Mind open to Conviction, and to think his Plan improved, if, from the Cenſure of his Labours, a Way is diſcovered to any important Truth, as having the Benefit of Mankind in View, and not the raiſing his own Reputation with Mankind.

Such were the Meditations that occupied my Thoughts when I firſt formed a Deſign of *illuminating* BRITAIN. It appeared to me, from the Information of Hiſtory, as well as from the Dictates of Senſe, that nothing is a greater Hindrance to Improvements of every kind, than a Notion that they are extremely difficult, or rather impracticable, except the contrary Fancy, that Perfection is already attained, or that it is Vanity, or Preſumption at leaſt, to think of carrying Things farther. We find, however, Writers not a little inclined to lend the Aſſiſtance of Wit, and the Appearance of Argument, to ſupport theſe Doctrines upon particular Occaſions. Mention the Acquiſition of ſome Manufacture, for which we pay large Sums to our Neighbours, a thouſand Obſtacles are ſtarted, and all of them invincible. Intimate that our Anceſtors were poſſeſſed of ſome Advantages which we want, and which ought therefore to be retrieved: the Fact is preſently queſtioned, or the Wiſh is treated with Ridicule. A cool Inquirer will, however, eaſily ſee, that many Improvements that have been thought, and in times paſt perhaps found impracticable, through the Change of Situation and Circumſtances, are not ſo now; and that even the new Improvements we have made, have created Wants which were before unknown, and which it may be very expedient to ſupply. It may alſo happen, that what foreign Ingenuity invented elſewhere, may to Advantage be adopted here; or that in a long Series of Years ſuch a Change may have been made amongſt ourſelves, as may afford the Means of introducing Benefits unexpected, or extirpating Inconveniencies ſuppoſed to admit of no Remedy but Patience. My Buſineſs has been to remark Incidents of this Nature, which, with a Variety of other Obſervations, connected only by their Reference to public Utility, compoſe this Work, which, for the Eaſe of the Reader, is divided into Six Books.

In

In the First Book the Island of *Great Britain* is treated generally, in order to explain the many Advantages arising from its Situation and Circumstances, in regard to Power, Defence, and Commerce; most of which have been hitherto but slightly and superficially considered. This opens an easy Passage to prove that we are not so partial as Foreigners commonly imagine, in esteeming so highly the Prerogatives of this Country, which appear more numerous and more considerable, the closer they are enquired into, and the more strictly they are examined; and also shews us plainly, what we owe to Nature and Providence, and, consequently, what may be reputed the intrinsic Treasures of this noble Isle, placed intirely out of the reach of Strangers, and of the Benefits arising from which we can only be deprived and defrauded by ourselves. Speculations, capable of raising the Hopes of those genuine Patriots, who look forward beyond the present Generation, and please themselves with the anticipated View of *Britain*'s future Glories; when her interior Force shall be fully exerted, and her true Interests, in reference to these Improvements, clearly understood.

The Lands of *Britain* are treated in the Second Book, in reference not only to their Cultivation and Produce of different kinds, but as to the Tenures also by which they are held; their comparative Values in different Places and Times; the Advantages of public Roads, and settled Conveyances by Post; the Coasting and Inland Navigation, with whatever else relates to the Communication and Connection of one Port or Province of this Island with the rest. In which the modern Improvements are looked upon barely as Instances of what may be done, and Circumstances of Encouragement to do more, and to efface the Memory of their Improvements, whom we follow, (as they have done by those who went before them) by our own; without repining at the Thoughts that we too shall be likewise exceeded by Posterity, in virtue of the Lights we leave them, and a gradual Removal of those Obstacles which have so long impeded a vigorous Prosecution of those Methods, by which the Bounty of Nature may receive the greatest Helps from the Hand of Art.

In the Third the Inhabitants of all Ranks are considered; and this affords a favourable Occasion of setting our happy Constitution in a true Point of light. We stile it excellent; and we stile it so justly, as allowing us a greater Measure of rational Liberty than any other Political System, antient or modern. For, being subject only to the Laws, and not to Men, further than as they are entrusted with the Execution of them, we are governed by Wisdom, not Will; and know at once the Compass of our Rulers Power, and the Measure of our own Obedience. The common Felicity of the Subject is the Object of our Government; at the Expence of which none, in point of Grandeur, have any Title to be gratified; at the same time none are so low, as that

the

the Law ſhould diſregard them. If, through the Viciſſitudes from which even Bodies Politic are not exempt, any thing like this has happened, there can be no Offence in ſuggeſting that Poverty might be prevented, and ſomething of that Equality in Property, which is ſo eſſential to Freedom, procured by aſſigning farther Rewards, and giving more univerſal and effectual Encouragement to Virtue and Induſtry, by providing a proper Education for the Young, and a comfortable Maintenance for the Old and Feeble. Neither will it be ill taken, if we ſhould offer any Method of rendering our Puniſhments more efficacious, by directing them ſo as to correct their Morals, inſtead of afflicting even the worſt of our Fellow-creatures. A few Cautions are added, as to the ſimilar Effects of the ſeeming Extremes, compelled Celibacy, and unreſtrained Debauchery.

The Fourth Book treats of Revenue. In this ſome Pains are taken to ſhew, that as public Affairs cannot be adminiſtered without a ſuitable Proviſion for thoſe who are intruſted to adminiſter them, ſo if this Revenue be properly raiſed and applied, it will very little affect private Perſons; and conſequently, that Oppreſſion, though it may plead, can never be the real Effect of Neceſſity. Incidently, many Points regarding Public Debts, and Paper Credit, are alſo conſidered, their Conveniency and Danger ſtated, the Expediency of reducing the former, and reſtraining the latter, examined, and the Poſſibility of preventing either from affecting the Intereſt or Safety of the State, without recurring to extraordinary or unpopular Meaſures, ſet in the cleareſt Light. From whence it will appear, that the levying of Taxes improperly is much oftener a Grievance than the Taxes themſelves; and that Stock-jobbing, by which I mean Gaming, without having any Property in Stocks, is, inconteſtibly, more detrimental to the Nation than any real Preſſure from the Load of their Public Debts. At the Cloſe, the true Cauſes of the Dearneſs and Cheapneſs of Money are enquired into, and the Relation between the Rate of Intereſt and the Value of Land, is alſo diſcuſſed.

Our Factories, Settlements, and Colonies, in *Aſia*, *Africa*, and *America*, are the Buſineſs of the Fifth Book; in which they are ſhewn to be conſtituent Parts of the *Britiſh* Empire, and equally worthy of Attention and Protection. The Importance of the laſt is rendered manifeſt from Facts, as well as Arguments; and it is proved they may be ſtill rendered of much greater Importance. The Objection of their leſſening the Number of our People, is not only obviated, but it is alſo put beyond Diſpute, that our Colonies have augmented our People, and, if properly conducted, muſt continue to augment them. It is farther made evident, there are no juſt Grounds to apprehend they will ever become independent, unleſs through our own Faults; and that it is very poſſible, by kind and gentle Meaſures, to connect them ſo cloſely to their Mother-Country, as that Independency ſhall be as little in their Thoughts as in their Power. The Benefits derived from her Colonies to *Britain*, and from *Britain*

to her Colonies, are proved to be reciprocal: So that the Ruin or Proſperity of each depends on the Conduct of both. In fine, that as the Planting of Colonies extended the Dominion of *Great Britain*, their Increaſe and Management has ſo effectually wrought them into our Syſtem of Power, that no Separation can be now attempted, that does not threaten Ruin to the Whole; and conſequently nothing conſiſtent with our own Safety can be juſtly refuſed, that is neceſſary to ſupport them.

The laſt Book regards Commerce, which may be truely ſtiled the Daughter of Liberty, and the Mother of Abundance. Reaſon and Experience teach, that, in regard to this, an honeſt Man would rather perſuade the repealing many of the old, than enacting any new Laws. But certainly Trade is our great Intereſt, to which our Governors cannot pay too much Attention; for the Support of which they cannot expreſs too great Concern. But, at the ſame time, this Concern cannot be expreſſed with too much Caution. In other Countries Commerce is very frequently the Work of Art, and muſt therefore be ſuſtained in the ſame manner it was eſtabliſhed. To this Country it is natural; and, for that Reaſon, thrives beſt with the leaſt Pruning. Laws to extirpate Fraud, to promote Induſtry, to prevent Combinations and Oppreſſion, are thoſe that have the happieſt Influence on Commerce. Some indeed have entertained a Notion, that Fraud and Trade are inſeparable: And the Truth is, they are too frequently connected; but then we muſt conſider Fraud as the Ruſt of Commerce, and that, like other Ruſts, it is an infallible Token of Corruption and Decay. There is ſomething, which if Law could promote, would cleanſe this Ruſt: It is Frugality; but that can only be promoted by Example. The principal Hints in this Book reſpect the reviving of loſt, the opening of new, and the rendering the Branches of Commerce now in Uſe, more advantageous; that is, in a national Senſe; for all Attention to private and particular Advantages has, through the whole, been ſtudiouſly avoided.

In conſequence of the Principles laid down in the preceding Books, there follow ſome important Propoſals in the APPENDIX, which are entirely ſubmitted to the Reader's Examination, and the Judgment of the Public; for the Benefit of which they are calculated; and for this Reaſon, perhaps, may ſtand intitled to ſome Indulgence.

The Boldneſs of the Attempt to ſketch out a kind of political Map of *Great Britain*, will have ſome Claim to pardon, when it is conſidered to how great and manifold Uſes it may be turned. This is the principal Merit I have to plead, that I have ſtretched the Canvas, and, however rudely, have drawn the Out-lines of a great Piece, worthy indeed of a better Pencil; which I ſincerely wiſh my Errors may procure. At all Events I ſhall be ſecure of this, that my original and capital View will not be defeated: For whoever improves upon, and corrects my Miſtakes, will proceed in the Execution of my Plan; and Abilities capable of being thus employed, will certainly be attended with a Candour that will do Juſtice to my Intention.

CONDITIONS.

I. THIS Work will be elegantly printed on the ſame Paper, with Types of the ſame Size as this Specimen, in Two Volumes in Quarto, containing about One hundred and Fifty Sheets.

II. The Price to Subſcribers will be Two Guineas; One to be paid at Subſcribing; the other on the Delivery of both Volumes, in *March* 1756.

III. It will be put to the Preſs about *Midſummer* next, as ſoon as the Number of Subſcribers fixes the Number to be printed.

Propoſals to be had, and Receipts delivered, by the Author, at his Houſe in *Red-Lion-ſtreet, Holborn*, till the Work ſhall be put to the Preſs; when the Names of the Bookſellers will be added.

N. B. *There is a new Fount of Letter now caſting, with which this* WORK *will be printed.*